

12. *Phalacrocorax carunculatus* (Gm.). "St. Magdalena. 4 Oct. 1867."

Eggs (4):— 2.6×1.54 ; 2.54×1.58 ; 2.44×1.63 ; 2.34×1.49 . Of the ordinary character of the genus.

13. *Cygnus nigricollis* (Gm.). "Elizabeth Island. Oct. 1867."

Eggs (3):— 4.06×2.71 ; 4.13×2.69 ; 4.31×2.73 . Of a dull yellowish-white. The size seems sufficient to justify the ascription of these to the above-mentioned species: the only doubt can lie in the direction of *C. coscoroba*.

14. *Chloephaga magellanica* (Gm.). "Elizabeth Island. Nov. 1867."

Egg:— 3.3×2 . Dull creamy-white. Named to me as above by Dr. Cunningham.

15. *Micropterus cinereus* (Gm.). "Elizabeth Island. Nov. 1867."

Eggs (2):— 3.2×2.22 ; 3.3×2.4 . Dull creamy-white.

XLI.—Notices of Recent Ornithological Publications.

I. ENGLISH.

OUR friend Mr. Blanford's volume* is one that we can heartily recommend to our readers. Attached officially as geologist to the late Abyssinian expedition, he was equally mindful of recent and of fossil forms, of the distribution of animal life and of the superposition of strata; while, being on the spot when the army started from Annesley Bay, he had the good fortune of being allowed to accompany its march to Magdala; and though, when that town had become the "scorched rock" the telegraph designated it, he was naturally disgusted at being unable to advance further into Abyssinia; he everywhere made good use of his time, and was, on the embarkation of the forces, permitted, in company with Mr. Jesse, the zoologist of the expedition (who had been compelled to remain in the rear), to get up an excursion to the Bogos country, which

* Observations on the Geology and Zoology of Abyssinia, made during the progress of the British Expedition to that country in 1867-68. By W. T. BLANFORD, &c. &c., late Geologist to the Abyssinian Expedition. With illustrations and geological map. London: 1870. 8vo, pp. 487.

was fruitful in many ways. Mr. Blanford has wisely divided his book into three parts, "Personal Narrative," "Geology," and "Zoology," in the last of which ornithology occupies a prominent position. He obtained specimens of 293 species, six of which were new. Five of these he described last year in the 'Annals of Natural History;' but in the publication of the sixth he was forestalled by Dr. von Heuglin (*cf.* Zool. Rev. vi. pp. 80, 81). All six, however, together with another—*Eremomela griseiflava*, Heugl., are here beautifully figured by Mr. Keulemans. They are *Hirundo aethiopica*, *Phylloscopus abyssinicus*, *Ruticilla* (?) *fuscicaudata*, *Alauda prætermissa*, *Cri-thagra flavivertex* and *Pratincola semitorquata*, Heugl. The observations on these and all the remaining species are well worth the attention of ornithologists; and the whole book is alike creditable to the author, the Bombay government, under whose orders he was acting, and the military authorities who gave him opportunity for his operations.

Of the 'Monograph of the *Capitonidæ*'*, which we had the pleasure of announcing at the beginning of the year (*supra*, p. 156), we have received four parts, and they well carry out the expectations that were entertained of them. A recent paper by the authors on the classification of this family, published in the Zoological 'Proceedings' (1870, pp. 117–120), shows very clearly their views; and we must congratulate them upon their moderation—it has only been necessary to found one new genus! This is for the reception of *Buccanodon anchietæ*, Bocage (P. Z. S. 1869, p. 436), which, having the rictal bristles rudimentary or wanting, the tomia smooth, and the culmen swollen, differs sufficiently from other forms to justify its separation as the type of a new one, to which the name of *Stactolæma* is applied. On the other hand the genus *Buccanodon* is altogether dropped, it being so very similar to *Xylobucco*, which is the older name. The groups *Eubucco*, *Cyanops*, and *Choro-tea*

* A Monograph of the *Capitonidæ*, or Scansorial Barbets. By C. H. T. MARSHALL, F.Z.S., Bengal Staff Corps; and G. F. L. MARSHALL, F.Z.S., Royal Bengal Engineers. The plates drawn and lithographed by M. Keulemans. Parts i.–iv. London: 1870.

of Bonaparte are also rejected, the first being reunited to *Capito*, and the last two merged in *Megalæma*. The *Capitonidæ* may be divided primarily and, perhaps we may say, provisionally into three subfamilies:—*Pogonorhynchinæ*, represented in America and Africa, *Megalæminæ*, in Africa and Asia, and *Capitoninæ*, common to all those continents. But to speak of the 'Monograph' itself; the letterpress has obviously been worked at with much care, and we certainly cannot point out any available source of information which the authors have neglected. If, notwithstanding this, there are persons so hard to please as to be discontented at its being somewhat meagre, they ought to remember that the fault does not lie at the door of the Messrs. Marshall—who themselves have had considerable personal experience of at least the Indian species, and contribute some interesting and unrecorded facts as to the economy. The illustrations, as usual with those of Mr. Keulemans, show that they have been drawn by a close observer of live birds, and are beautifully coloured. It grieves us to say that with all this the printer has performed his task ill; and the authors, naturally more conversant with types of another sort, have not been able to correct his blunders.

The value of Mr. Sharpe's '*Alcedinidæ*'* is so widely known that there is the less need for us to say much of it here—more especially, too, as we should have no chance (even if we wished) of deluding our readers into the belief that in this case the critic knows more of the subject than the author. The work goes on as it was begun, and the three parts now before us deserve all that we have before said of their predecessors (*Ibis*, 1869, p. 215, *et supra*, p. 121). We cannot abstain from noticing the very suggestive difference in style of coloration observable in the young and old of the rare *Alcedo euryzona*, and we suspect Mr. Sharpe has hit the truth in his remark on this point. Of the plates we can only say that if some of the figures are a little stiff and awkward, it must be ascribed to the fact that the artist had already exhausted all the graceful attitudes, and was

* A Monograph of the *Alcedinidæ* or Kingfishers, by R. B. SHARPE, F.L.S., Libr.Z.S., &c. Parts vii.-ix. London: 1870.

too much imbued with the spirit of scientific truth to draw upon his imagination for unreal figures. When this work is finished, it will be almost impossible to delineate a Kingfisher in a position not before represented.

Mr. Wallace has conferred a benefit on the world at large by publishing in a handy volume* ten essays, of which nine have been previously printed in as many different journals, while the tenth now appears for the first time. Most of these, valuable and interesting as they are, lie beside our path; for we have always looked upon what the Germans have taken to call "*Darwinismus*" as not coming properly within the scope of 'The Ibis.' Three of these dissertations, however, will, we are sure, be read or re-read with pleasure by all ornithologists, even though they do not agree with the author; and these are the Third, Sixth, and Seventh of the series as now arranged. To be critical, we must mention that some of the author's assertions seem open to grave objection. Cordially agreeing, as we do, with the general argument in the essay on "Mimicry," we cannot understand Mr. Wallace citing as a case in point (pp. 53, 54) such a statement as this:—"The wood-dove, when perched among the branches of its favourite *fir*, is scarcely discernible; whereas were it among some lighter foliage, the blue and purple tints in its plumage would far sooner betray it." There is no reason to suppose that predatory animals are "colour blind," and indeed all Mr. Wallace's argument would fall to the ground if they were; but we think his authority must have been so afflicted; for what is more unlike the green of any species of *fir* with which we are acquainted than the "blue and purple tints" which make up dove-colour we do not easily conceive; and certainly, according to our own experience, a Pigeon is more conspicuous on any of the dark and commoner *firs* than on a beech, an oak or an elm. Our author's long sojournings in foreign parts must, too, have caused him to forget his birds'-nesting days at home; for he says (p. 216):—"The lark frequents cultivated fields, and makes its nest, on the ground, of grass lined

* Contributions to the theory of Natural Selection. A series of essays. By ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE. London: 1870. 8vo, pp. 384.

with *horsehair*." Now we suppose he is here referring to *Alauda arvensis*—emphatically *the* Lark of this country ; and we can only say that if we had found such a nest, we should have been exceedingly surprised at learning that it belonged to a Sky-Lark. Again, according to Mr. Wallace (p. 229), the Golden-crested Wren, in exposed situations, builds "a perfect domed nest with a side entrance," which is something we have never seen and certainly never expect to see from this bird. Once more, had our author ever examined the nest of a Waxwing, and traversed the northern forests wherein it breeds—which we suppose he has not, we think he would not have talked (pp. 255, 256) of the harmony of the colours of the bird's plumage and of the black or iron-grey lichens which compose or bedeck its nest. These, no doubt, effectually help to conceal it from hostile eyes ; but we feel sure that there is nothing in the material of the structure or the surrounding vegetation that at all resembles the brighter colours of the occupant. So much of what is advanced in Mr. Wallace's "Philosophy" and "Theory of Birds' Nests" is undeniably true, that we the more regret his calling into court evidence which can be shown to be untrustworthy ; for such cannot fail to deteriorate the effect of that which is to be unreservedly believed, and his case generally is far too strong to require the aid of doubtful testimony. We say thus much without pledging ourselves to the full acceptance of his views as set forth in the Sixth and Seventh Essays. Ably and fairly as he argues, we think there is a good deal to be brought forward on the other side, and for ourselves we should prefer suspending our judgment on the questions involved.

Mr. Morrell's pamphlet* is a well-directed attempt at laying before beginners Prof. Huxley's system of classification of Birds, with which our readers are sufficiently acquainted (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1868, pp. 85, 357), though the public generally is not ; but all except the osteological characters therein given are omitted,

* The Student's Manual of Comparative Anatomy, and Guide to Dissection, &c. Part II. *Sauropsidæ*. Section I. *Aves*. By G. HERBERT MORRELL, M.A., B.C.L., Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy and Physiology in the University Museum, Oxford. Oxford: [1870.] 8vo, pp. 75.

and thus its value is, to some extent, diminished. We have more than once maintained in these pages that any taxonomic scheme not based upon the aggregate of all the characters which are afforded by animals must be an artificial one; and if it is thought beneath the dignity of Anatomy to regard some because they are superficial, so much the worse, we should say, for the results to which that science may lead us. The author also gives a concordance of Prof. Huxley's scheme with those of Cuvier and of Mr. Gray, which will be found very handy to students, though it contains some errors; for instance, the first group of *Coracomorphæ*, composed of the genus *Menura* only, cannot be said to be "co-extensive" with Mr. Gray's *Certhiidae*. The larger part of the publication, however, is taken up by a condensed summary of the principal points to be noted in the anatomy of Birds, which certainly gives more useful information on the subject than any other English book with which we are acquainted; and the whole concludes with a most practical chapter on dissection. Should the work reach a second edition, as it deserves, we advise Mr. Morrell to consult the introduction to Macgillivray's 'British Birds,' which will, we think, furnish him with some further hints. We hope, too, he will get a better printer, as well as cast aside the false delicacy which makes him silent on one very important group of organs. *Puris omnia pura*.

There has for some years existed a Marlborough College Natural History Society, warmly fostered, if not originally founded; by the Rev. T. A. Preston, one of the masters of the school; and this Society has published half-yearly reports showing a laudable amount of activity among its members. At last one of these young gentlemen has brought out a work on his own account*, which we here notice with pride as showing the spirit of our public-school boys. It was of course not to be expected that such a book would contain any real addition to science, and it does not; but we are greatly mistaken if it has

* Birds of Marlborough, being a contribution to the Ornithology of the District. By EVERARD IM THURN. Marlborough and London: 1870. 12mo, pp. 117.

not a very good effect in encouraging the study of zoology at our schools generally, and at this one in particular. Marlburians past, present, and to come, must ever regard Mr. Everard im Thurn as a hero, fit to match the champions of Harrow and Eton, whose prowess has before been recorded in these pages. We trust he will not repose upon his laurels.

2. FRENCH.

With our very limited space it is difficult to speak in adequate terms of the labours of M. Alphonse Milne-Edwards; but we must briefly recount the progress made in his great work*. The extinct species figured in the five numbers published since our last notice (*Ibis*, 1869, pp. 218-220), are the following:—

“ <i>Rallides</i> .”		Palæoperdix longipes.		} Tertiary.
Aphanapteryx brœckii† (<i>cf. Ibis</i> , 1869, pp. 256-275).		—— prisca.		
		—— sansaniensis.		
		Phasianus medius.		
		—— altus.		
“ <i>Gallinacés</i> .”		—— desnoyersi.		
Taoperdix pessietii.	} Eocene.	“ <i>Colombides</i> .”		} Miocene.
Palæortyx hoffmanni.		Pterocles sepultus.		
—— blanchardi.	} Tertiary.	Columba calcarea.		
—— gallica.				
—— brevipes.				
—— phasianoides.				

More interesting than these, if possible, however, are the remains of still existing species figured as having been found chiefly in the bone-caverns of the south of France, of which certainly one lives no longer in that country; these are, *Tetrao albus*, *T. scoticus* (?), *T. lagopus*, *T. urogallus*, a species of *Gallus*, *Perdix cinerea*, *Coturnix communis*, and, from the peat, *Columba palumbus*. On the importance of the discovery of the Willow-Grouse we before remarked (*Ibis*, 1866, p. 414); and we look forward with great pleasure to the details which must be contained

* Recherches anatomiques et paléontologiques pour servir à l'histoire des Oiseaux Fossiles de la France. Par ALPHONSE MILNE-EDWARDS. Livraisons 26-30. Paris: 1869. 4to.

† We may here remark that Ritter Georg von Franenfeld has lately strongly objected (*Verhandl. z.-b. Gesellsch. Wien*, 1869, pp. 761-764) to the substitution of this name for that of *A. imperialis* given by him.

in the next few *livraisons*, whenever the events that are now so unhappily occurring in France admit of their publication.

But the foregoing has not been the only recent work of M. A. Milne-Edwards. He has contributed an article on "Oiseaux Fossiles" to the second edition of the 'Dictionnaire Universel d'Histoire Naturelle' (vol. ix. pp. 671-719), which gives, as might be expected from the author, by far the most complete general account of Fossil Ornithology we have ever seen, from the Sauropsids (whether they were truly birds or no) which left their footprints on the sands of time in triassic days, and the real "early bird," *Archæopteryx*, to the latest (if they are the latest) victims of extinction, the Great Auk and the Phillip-Island *Nestor*. The perusal of these remarks naturally raises the question, Whose turn is it next?

3. BELGIAN.

In spite of the popular belief to the contrary, the most disagreeable duty of an editor is the having to notice books in praise of which, however willing to do so, he can say nothing—and the more so when the author has himself paid the debt of nature. Such is unfortunately the case at the present moment. The two works of M. Dubois* which have been publishing during the last ten years, or thereabouts, certainly require notice; but we exceedingly regret to say that we have not a good word for them. If these publications left things exactly where they were, it might perhaps not have been necessary to mention them; but this is exactly what they do not do. The author must needs bestow on perfectly well-known species new names. Why should the poor little bird so unobjectionably described more than eighty years ago as *Motacilla superciliosa* be encumbered with a new appellation in addition to the half-dozen or so it already bore? Yet here it figures as "*Phylloscopus pallasii*, Dubois"—the English of which, our readers will be delighted to learn,

* Planches coloriées des Oiseaux de la Belgique et de leurs Œufs. Par CH. F. DUBOIS. Bruxelles. Royal 8vo.

Planches coloriées des Oiseaux de l'Europe et de leurs Œufs, espèces non observées en Belgique. Par CH. F. DUBOIS. Bruxelles. Royal 8vo.

is "Pallaschi's *Regulus*"! They will also, we have no doubt, be grateful for the information respecting the Red Grouse, that "Cette espèce habite les endroits tourbeux de l'Écosse riches en bruyères; elle est plus rare en Irlande et ne parvient qu'accidentellement en Angleterre," and, further, "Le *Lagopus scoticus* ne diffère du *L. saliceti* qu'en ce qu'il ne se revêt pas, comme ce dernier, d'un plumage blanc pour la saison d'hiver. Il est donc probable, comme le fait observer M. le docteur Gloger, que cet oiseau a été introduit, il y a quelques siècles, en Grande Bretagne par des amateurs de chasse." What an encouraging reflection for the acclimatizers!

4. GERMAN.

We cannot pretend to do justice in a few cursory remarks to the recent elaborate work of Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub*. Far more abundant leisure than for many months—we might almost say for years—has been at our disposal would be required to enable us to speak of the 'Birds of Eastern Africa' in any but general terms. Every page of the bulky volume shows the laborious care that has been exercised or even lavished on this labour of love: and if the book is to be at all adequately reviewed, we must bequeath the task to our successor. To say merely that it will be for many years to come the standard authority on the subject of which it treats is only to say that the work is just what might have been expected from its erudite authors, and we confess ourselves utterly incompetent to enter upon its details. With all this, however, we observe with regret that the ultra-purist theories in the matter of nomenclature for which the younger author is distinguished have been so far yielded to by the elder. It seems to us that in following the letter of the supposed principle of scientific name-making, he has lost sight of its spirit and has altogether disregarded the practice of the highest classical writers, who (as there is abundant evidence to prove) seldom hesitated, when it suited their

* Baron Carl Claus von der Decken's *Reisen in Ost-Afrika*. Vierter Band: Die Vögel Ost-Afrikas von Dr. O. FINSCH und Dr. G. HARTLAUB. Mit 11 Tafeln in Buntdruck, n. d. Natur gez. von O. Finsch. Leipzig und Heidelberg: 1870. Imp. 8vo, pp. 897.

convenience, to adopt a barbarous word and naturalize it in their own language. The consequence is a multiplication of synonyms which is as needless as it is mischievous; for nothing really can be so detrimental to the study of any branch of biology as changes of names adopted merely for the furtherance of a whim. We have no compunction in declaring our full acceptance of the rules of the Stricklandian code—a code drawn up after long and deep consideration of the subject in all its multifarious aspects and after repeated exchange of ideas, not only with the best ornithologists of all countries, but with the best zoologists generally, each in the branch of study to which he had especially applied himself. Now *frances-tireurs* who wear no uniform and recognize no discipline are, by the laws of war, subject to severe penalties; indeed there is, according to the publicists, but one step between them and pirates—*humani generis hostes*. No code on any subject whatever was, we believe, so fully submitted to international authority as the Stricklandian; those who infringe it knowingly are, we hold, guilty of a grave offence, and we are sorry to find our respected friends Drs. Hartlaub and Finsch among the number. With this protest we desire to express our extreme admiration of the work.

We have so often been asked to recommend, both to tyros and to adepts, a good work on the general structure and chief peculiarities of birds, and have so often been compelled to say that none such existed, that it is with especial pleasure we at last see the prospect of one which will answer the purpose. In most general works on Comparative Anatomy the class *Aves* receives but scant notice, and is so treated as to be only useful to mere beginners, who find that they are led but a little way on their particular path of study. The “coming man” who appears likely to fill the void is Professor Emil Selenka, of the University of Leyden, whose continuation of Bronn’s work on the Animal Kingdom* deserves high praise; for the two parts relating to

* Dr. H. G. Bronn’s Klassen und Ordnungen des Thier-Reichs wissenschaftlich dargestellt in Wort und Bild. Fortgesetzt von Dr. EMIL SELENKA. Sechster Band. IV. Abtheilung. *Aves*. Lieferungen 1, 2. Leipzig und Heidelberg: 1869.

birds which we have seen, give promise that the book will be most serviceable. The author shows that he is able to make good use of some of the latest discoveries in ornithology, such as those of Professors Gegenbaur and Huxley and of Mr. Parker, while there is proof also of his being an original worker in the same field. The book is well "got up;" the illustrations are wisely chosen and neatly drawn, though we could have wished they had been on a larger scale. An English publisher looking about for a book on birds generally which would be really worth translating, would do well, if the market be not already stocked (as is to be feared may be the case) with a worse article, to make arrangements with the author for the reproduction of this work.

Having said this much in commendation of Prof. Selenka's performance, we may mention two other publications which have appeared within the last two years and have not hitherto been noticed by us. These are by Prof. Claus, of Marburg, and Prof. Victor Carus, of Leipzig, respectively. The first* is a very different sort of book from Prof. Selenka's; and though we have no reason to complain of the amount of space devoted to ornithology, the treatise seems to be considerably behind the age, and contains many inaccuracies. The second† is the product of a transition period—the author striving to "make things pleasant" between discordant classifications, and with the usual unhappy result which attends compromises in any but social and political questions. May we venture to rehearse one article of our faith? No ornithological system can in these days stand the test of time which does not recognize as a cardinal point the primary divisions of the Class as it now exists, the *Ratitæ* and *Carinatae*; and any writer who intercalates the former (call them by what name we please, *Struthiones*, *Cursores*, *Impennes*, or what not) with members of the latter is at variance with the greatest principle that scientific ornithology can teach.

* Grundzüge der Zoologie zum Gebrauche an Universitäten und höheren Lehranstalten. Von Dr. CARL CLAUS. Marburg und Leipzig: 1868. 8vo, pp. 840.

† Handbuch der Zoologie. Erster Band. I. Hälfte. Wirbelthiere, bearbeitet von J. VICTOR CARUS. Leipzig: 1868. 8vo, pp. 432.

5. SWEDISH.

The lands visited by Linnæus form classic ground to the naturalist; and hence Herr Meves in 1867 was led to undertake an "Öländska Resa," but with less general objects than his great forerunner, since ornithology was the single aim of the industrious and intelligent conservator of the Stockholm Museum in visiting Öland. Other specialists, however, have been there also—"Ibises" among the number; for whither have they not wandered? but they do not seem to have found much to say for themselves; and indeed bread in which there is as much sand as flour, and cold boiled eels with beans dressed in treacle, washed down by a spirit in praise of which all that can be said is that it is believed not to have been intentionally methyated, do not make a cheering diet even for the most ardent ornithologist; and he would be scarcely inclined to renew his recollections of such wretchedness by publishing his observations. This perhaps was the cause of our friends' reticence; but Herr Meves, whom we sincerely hope may have fared better, is of stouter heart, and his latest "Contribution to Sweden's Ornithology," in the form of a "Report on a Journey to Öland and Scania" made by the help of the Royal Scientific Academy of Stockholm and printed in their 'Öfversigt' for 1868, deserves some notice here; for though there is perhaps nothing of any remarkable novelty among the author's observations, yet he is so safe a man that we feel we at last possess a trustworthy account of the birds of this not inconsiderable island, which was certainly not the case so long as Lector Westerlund's list* was the only one to be had. We have no wish to be hard on the errors of any body's youth, and it is at least fifteen years since that gentleman published his observations; but one's confidence was rudely shaken in the remainder by the erroneous assertion that *Larus minutus* was commonly found and known by him to breed in the island.

It is so long since we noticed (Ibis, 1865, p. 534) Professor Sundevall's 'Swedish Birds'†, that perhaps some of our readers

* "Öfversigt af Ölands Foglar och Amphibier." Götheborgs K. Vetensk. och Vitterh. Samh. Handl. Ny Tidsföljd, iii. (1853-54) pp. 56-72.

† Svenska Foglarna med text af Professor CARL J. SUNDEVALL tecknade

will have forgotten that such a work was in course of publication. Four more parts have reached us, and we have only to complain of the way it lags towards completion. It may possibly outlast the next series of 'The Ibis;' but we know the blame does not lie with the author.

We are in possession of two more portions of Herr Holmgren's 'Birds of Scandinavia'*, of which we noticed the first part more than two years since (Ibis, 1868, p. 113). They are very fairly done; but the plates at the end are old friends of ours, having served to illustrate Ström's little 'Svenska Foglarna' more than thirty years ago—a fact of which we have not been able to find any mention made by the modern author. The woodcuts also show that the art of "crib" is not unknown in Sweden. Some interesting particulars are given (pp. 725–727) of the attempts at naturalizing *Lagopus scoticus* near Jonsered by Mr. Oscar Dickson, of Gottenburg, which are promising and will, we trust, be successful. Since it seems by all accounts that the Common Partridge was imported into Sweden, there is perhaps the greater hope that the Red Grouse may thrive there equally well in certain localities. These two portions contain the *Accipitres*, *Columbæ*, *Gallinæ* and *Grallæ*: another part ought to complete the work.

6. DANISH.

The subject of Flight having more than once been mentioned in these pages (*supra*, pp. 266–268), we may notice a pamphlet which has reached us from Denmark, though written in English†. The author begins by explaining in the usual manner the way in which a boat sails on a wind, and, thereon basing his explanation of the mechanics of flight, assumes that the motions of wings

och lithographierade af Peter Åkerlund. Häft xvii.–xx. Stockholm: 1866–69.

* Handbok i Zoologi m. m. II. Delen. Skandinaviens Foglar af AUG. EMIL HOLMGREN. Senare Häftet. i. ii. Stockholm: 1867–70. 8vo, pp. 435–930, pls. 6.

† Essay to a Theory of the Flight of Birds, Bats, and Insects. By C. J. L. KRARUP-HANSEN, late Master of Natural Sciences at the Danish College of Haderslev. Copenhagen: 1869. 8vo, pp. 42.

are far more simple than they probably are. He then describes a machine by which he satisfied himself of the correctness of his views, and obtained some of his data (for the calculation of which he gives a sketch), leading him to the marvellous conclusion that it requires the force of one horse-power to raise a weight of 30 lbs. by the action of wings. Consequently a Pigeon weighing $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. exercises the sixtieth part of a horse-power in rising, and a Lämmergeier of 15 lbs. employs half a horse-power. He says nothing about the rapidity with which this expenditure of energy would enable the birds to rise, but implies that no smaller force would permit them to do so—all of which it is needless to refute. Mr. Krarup-Hansen would appear not to have thoroughly mastered the difficult subject of the dynamics of motion in a resisting medium; it is therefore not very easy to follow the steps by which he arrives at his conclusion; but we take leave to question altogether one of his assertions. "It is not seldom," he says (p. 7), "we hear the wings of pigeons, rising into the air, strike together beneath and, though more rarely, above the body of the bird." That the wings strike together above, almost every Pigeon-fancier knows; but that they ever do so beneath is more than doubtful. On the whole, we may say that the author, having assumed an entirely imaginary method of flight, proceeds to reason very fairly on his premisses—but these being (as we imagine) false, his argument comes to the ground.

7. SWISS.

We are much obliged by the receipt of the second part of the second volume of the '*Bulletin de la Société Ornithologique Suisse*,' which contains an excellent Bibliography of Swiss Ornithology by Dr. Carl Stœlker, giving the titles of more than 130 separate publications or papers connected with the subject, besides references to a vast number of mostly shorter notices, the whole being the work of nearly 120 authors. Besides this, there is an interesting essay by M. Jean Saratz on the Birds of the Upper Engadine, which may be read in connexion with the remarks of Dr. Baldamus published in 1867 (*Zeitschr. gesamt. Naturwiss.* lvi. pp. 99, 100), and then a paper communicated by M. Victor Fatio, with the chief points of which our readers

are already acquainted (*cf. supra*, pp. 256–261)*; while the number is concluded by extracts from the “*Procès-verbaux*” of the Society for 1867, 1868, and part of 1869, showing that our Swiss brethren are fully alive to all that is going on in the ornithological world.

8. ITALIAN.

We are indebted to the kindness of our good fellow-labourer Dr. Salvadori for copies of five papers contributed by him to Italian journals. The first, from the ‘Atti’ of the Italian Society of Natural Sciences, is on the occurrence of stray birds in Italy: all those noticed are *Accipitres*, and the most noteworthy is *Buteo ferox*, killed near Genoa in April 1869. The second, communicated to the same publication, contains the description of a bird on which the author subsequently addressed us a letter (*supra*, p. 296), thereby setting an excellent example to all naturalists. The third is from the ‘Atti’ of the Royal Academy of Turin, and describes four new species:—two *Saxicola*, *S. albo-marginata* from the Tunisian Sahara, and *S. brehmi* from Abyssinia and, perhaps, Nubia; *Brachypus urostictus* from the Philippine Islands, and a form from the same locality belonging to the family *Timaliidae*, which, under the name of *Homochlamys lusciniæ*, is described as the type of a new genus, having much affinity to *Trochalopteron*, but with a straight bill and longer tarsi. The fourth paper is an Italian version of that which he and Dr. Giglioli (who has also kindly sent us a copy) have already contributed to our pages (*supra*, pp. 185–187); while the fifth is a review of the Marchese Antinori’s ‘Catalogo’ (*cf. Ibis*, 1864, pp. 400, 401), and contains remarks on about seventy species therein included, besides two others which that author appears to have overlooked. These remarks have been partly prompted by the notes appended by Dr. R. Hartmann to his translation of that catalogue, published by our esteemed contemporary the ‘Journal für Ornithologie;’ and Dr. Salvadori, in composing his

* We are just able to add, at the moment of going to press, that, as we learn from Mr. J. H. Gurney, Junr., the specimen of *Alca impennis* at Strasburg was uninjured by the recent bombardment of that town, and that the Museum there generally escaped without much injury—a piece of news we are sure that all naturalists will be glad to know.

'Rivista,' has received valuable assistance from Dr. Otto Finsch, which is freely acknowledged. Two plates are appended to this paper, one representing *Eremomela canescens* and *Nectarinia acik*, the other *Drymæca antinorii* and *D. troglodytes*—the last being identical with the *D. ferruginea* figured (not too faithfully, it is said) in our last year's volume (*Ibis*, 1869, pl. iii. fig. 2).

Professor Bianconi has brought to a conclusion his studies of the tarso-metatarsus of birds, the first instalment of which was noticed in 'The Ibis' long ago (1864, p. 399). His object has been to determine the affinities of *Æpyornis*; and he arrives at the conclusion that it was a Vulture, and probably the veritable "Roc" of Marco Polo. Whether his opinion has undergone any change since the recent discoveries of M. Grandidier, so elaborately laid before the world by Professor Alphonse Milne-Edwards (*Ann. Sci. Nat.* 5e sér. xii. pp. 167–196), we do not know, but we can hardly imagine any one now doubting that, whether "Roc" or not, *Æpyornis* was allied to the struthious birds. These papers of Prof. Bianconi's are published, like the former one, in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences of Bologna*.

9. PORTUGUESE.

In the 'Jornal de Sciencias' of Lisbon for the present year Prof. du Bocage has published a Fourth List of Birds from the Portuguese possessions in Western Africa, sent thence by Sr. Anchieta, to whom so much was previously due (*Ibis*, 1869, p. 117), and Srs. Toulson and Freitas Branco. This list contains notes on 135 species, of which some are described as new:—a *Cypselus*, left unnamed, *Anthus angolensis*, *Turdus verreauxi*, *Oriolus anderssoni* (cf. *supra*, pp. 218–220), *Telephonus anchieta*, *Lamprocolius acuticaudus* and *Francolinus hartlaubi*. In thanking the author for his kindness in forwarding us a copy of this list, upon which we regret that we have not space to dwell, we wish him every facility for the continuance of his valuable labours.

10. AMERICAN.

It is rather difficult to decide under what heading to include a book written by a citizen of the United States, illustrated by a

German, printed in England, and published nowhere; but we are ready to accord to the author's nationality all the credit (and it will be by no means small) which belongs to the 'Monograph of the *Phasianidæ*'*, of which the first number appeared in the course of the summer. Just as the joint product of the three species of Pheasant (the Common, the Ring-necked, and the Japanese) is a finer bird than any one of its progenitors, so is this, the offspring of three countries, the most beautifully finished ornithological work on which we have ever set our eyes. The drawing and colouring of the plates, after designs by Mr. Wolf, is indeed worthy the graceful and splendid objects they represent; and in the letterpress there is a manifest improvement over Mr. Elliot's former works. Among the species here figured (several for the first time) are four which were originally brought to notice in 'The Ibis'—*Polypectron germaini*, *Argus grayi*, *Cerionis blythi*, and *Numida verreauxi*, for which last the author makes out a very fair case (*cf. supra*, pp. 300, 443, *et* 444). With regard to the *Cerionis*, we may remark that the type of the species is the very bird which was last year taken to be a *C. temmincki* by Mr. Jerdon (*supra*, p. 147), who subsequently described it as new under the name above given in the 'Journal of the Asiatic Society,'—and also, though it is a matter of slight moment, that Mr. Elliot copies the erroneous statement made in the Zoological 'Proceedings' for the present year (p. 162), wherein it is said that the first notice of this bird was contained in a letter addressed by Mr. Jerdon to our distinguished predecessor, and "was accompanied by an enclosure upon the same subject for publication in 'The Ibis,' which was duly forwarded to the Editor of that journal"—the fact being that exactly the converse was the case. We heartily congratulate Mr. Elliot on this new undertaking, and trust it will meet with the encouragement it so fully deserves.

The ornithologists of the United States have not lost much time in making use of "Walrussia"—the last addition to the

* A Monograph of the *Phasianidæ* or Family of the Pheasants. By D. G. ELLIOT, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c. Part i. Published by the Author. June, 1870. Imp. fol., 15 plates.

territory of the Great Republic; and two articles on the birds of Alaska in the 'Transactions of the Chicago Academy of Sciences' and also published separately *, are of more than usual interest. The expedition before mentioned by us (*Ibis*, 1865, pp. 239, 240) sailed northwards from San Francisco in July 1865, and visited various places on either side of the Pacific—Mr. Kennicott, the chief of the division of naturalists, remaining to winter on the Yukon, where, in the month of May following, this indefatigable traveller died of a heart-complaint aggravated by exposure and privation. The direction of the scientific corps then devolved upon Mr. William H. Dall; and well he seems to have performed its duties. We have no room to chronicle his various journeys and explorations; suffice it to say that their ornithological results are most instructive, and are admirably set forth by himself and his colleague Mr. Bannister, assisted by further observations by Prof. Baird. Five new species were obtained, while three more, though previously known, are new to the American fauna. The most important feature of these discoveries is that they show a more decided Palæarctic bearing in this part of the Nearctic region than had hitherto been suspected. We have *Budytes flavus*, abundant at St. Michael's, in Norton Sound, a *Phyllopneuste*, described as new (*P. kennicotti*, Baird) and obtained at the same place, a *Pyrrhula* from the Yukon, which, though designated (by Prof. Baird) *P. coccinea*, var. *cassini*, appears to be a very good species, *Limosa uropygialis*, Gould, and *Graculus bicristatus* (Pall.)—none of which have before been recorded from the New World; while the remainder, now first described, are *Troglodytes alasensis*, *Leucosticte littoralis*, and *Sterna aleutica*, all of which birds, with some others, are figured. We may remark that Prof. Baird follows Cassin and Dr. Brewer in applying the name "*Falco sacer*, Forster," to the large Falcon found in Alaska, though he does so provisionally. We have before stated (*Ibis*, 1862, p. 51, note) that we were at a loss to refer this name to any known species; but if the character of the *yellow*

* List of the Birds of Alaska. With biographical Notes, by W. H. DALL and H. M. BANNISTER. With Descriptions of New Species, by Prof. S. F. BAIRD. Chicago: 1869. Roy. 8vo, pp. 267, 375, pls. 8.

irides, especially dwelt on by Forster, can be trusted, his bird must in all probability have been an immature example of *Astur atricapillus*. As this, however, must always remain doubtful, we hope no nomenclator will wish to use for the latter a name which has been attached for centuries to an altogether different bird, the Saker of falconers.

In honour of Señor Vargas, a distinguished citizen of Venezuela and the founder of the University of Caraccas, where, among other things, he was Professor of Anatomy, a scientific journal bearing the name of 'Vargasia' has been established by the Society of Physical and Natural Sciences at that capital. The fifth number of this periodical contains an account by Mr. Anton Goering of a visit to some unexplored caves inhabited by the *Steatornis caripensis*. This locality is situated two days' journey from Caripé (the original "Cueva del Guacharo" discovered by Humboldt being only a short distance from that city), and consists of two caves—the "Gran Cueva" and the "Cueva Pequeña," the former of which is said to contain more Guacharos than that which was before known.

11. AUSTRALASIAN.

The New-Zealand Institute has not been slow in following up its first good stroke (*supra*, pp. 135, 136) with another; and the second volume of its 'Transactions and Proceedings' is of excellent quality. We must indeed congratulate our antipodal friends on the discovery that they possess so intelligent, so observing, so accurate, and so enthusiastic an ornithologist as Mr. Thomas H. Potts, of Canterbury, whose paper "On the Birds of New Zealand" we would willingly, did space permit, have reproduced in our pages. This treats almost entirely of the habits of the birds of the country as observed by himself and his sons throughout a long residence, and will be of especial interest to oologists, to whom, indeed, New Zealand has hitherto been almost a *terra incognita*, the nests, several of which are very well figured, and eggs of fifty-three species being described at greater or less length. In the introductory observations, and, one may say, throughout the whole article, the

author discusses the various causes that have led almost to the extinction of so many birds in the colony, most of which causes, we fear, are still in operation, and are such that, unless some counteracting means be taken, they will in a few years utterly destroy the native avifauna, replacing it by a heterogeneous mixture supplied by the Acclimatization Societies. The enormous eggs laid by our old friend the Kiwi in the Regent's Park are pretty well known; but the wild *Apteryx australis* surpasses the efforts of the captive bird, and an egg in the Canterbury Museum measured 5 inches 1 line by 3 inches 4 lines. *Anarhynchus frontalis* does not seem to be so rare a species as was thought; and its eggs and young have been discovered by Mr. Potts, the former usually laid on the pebbles of some dry river-bed. In another ornithological paper Capt. Hutton records the addition to the list of New-Zealand birds of *Æstrelata gouldi* (cf. Ibis, 1869, pp. 351, 352) and *Nyroca australis*, and he also has some notes on the introduction of Pheasants into the islands. His paper on the flight of the Albatros, which we before noticed (*suprà*, p. 122), is also reprinted, as well as some comments upon it by Mr. S. Webb, of Otago; but as these are entirely mathematical in their kind, we need not dwell upon them here. The last contribution to ornithology in the volume is a brief abstract of some preliminary notes (p. 403) on a fossil Penguin, of which, we doubt not, we shall hear more in due time.

12. INDIAN.

To give his ornithological brethren in India the means of knowing what will be most useful for them, Mr. Allan Hume has commenced the publication of a series of 'Rough Notes'* transcribed from various sources. Many of them are original remarks, by himself or his numerous correspondents, which have not before been printed, while the remainder are extracts from the pages of 'The Ibis,' or from different standard works of a kind not easily carried about, even if they are possessed, by Englishmen in India; and the intent of the whole is that it

* My Scrap-book: or Rough Notes on Indian Oology and Ornithology. Edited by ALLAN HUME. Part I. *Raptores*.—No. 1. Calcutta: 1869 (London: E. Bumpus, Holborn Bars). 8vo, pp. 237.

should form a kind of supplement to Mr. Jerdon's well-known volumes. It naturally follows that such a compilation must be of very unequal merit; but that it will be of great service to Indian ornithologists is not to be doubted. The author, we think, in his preface depreciates his materials rather too unduly. Rough the notes are, essentially and avowedly; but so are diamonds before they are cut; and if the exigencies of the occasion have hindered him from presenting his jewels in an attractive form, he may be sure that he has among them some gems that will finally repay for setting. But the value of this 'Scrap-book' lies not alone in what it contains; it shows, and often pointedly, in what direction further information is needed; and, unless we err, the latter character is the one likely to prove most important. The notes in the part before us are of such a length that they do not even reach to the end of the diurnal *Accipitres* of India, but comprehend only the first two score of Mr. Jerdon's species, together with five others, of which three are given as new, though, thanks to Mr. Hume, our readers have been for some months acquainted with their diagnosis (*Ibis*, 1869, p. 356), and the remaining two are inhabitants respectively of the Andaman Islands and Ceylon. To Mr. Gurney we are indebted for pointing out some of the more interesting features of this book, in some notes with which he has favoured us. According to him, the Himalayan *Gyps fulvus*, which Mr. Hume is now inclined to separate as distinct, under the name of *G. himalayensis* (p. 12), is a good species, differing from the true *G. fulvus* by having the fourth primary the longest. On the other hand, *G. fulvescens* (*Ibis*, *l. c.*) Mr. Gurney considers to be the real *G. fulvus* in its immature condition. *Falco atriceps* (*l. c.*) he is disposed to accept as distinct, and informs us that examples of it are to be found in the museums of Norwich and Leyden—the specimen in the latter (no. 6 of Prof. Schlegel's Mus. P.-B. *Falcones*, p. 6) being labelled "*F. barbarus*." It would seem that it is *Erythropus amurensis** (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 41, pl. ii.), and not *E.*

* We regret to find that Drs. Hartlaub and Finsch have (*Vög. Ost-Afr.* p. 74) given another name to this species. Surely the fact of calling a bird after the locality in which it was first discovered does not imply that it occurs nowhere else!

vespertinus, that is found in India, as there is a specimen of the former from Nepal in the British Museum. Mr. Gurney further tells us that he regards *Accipiter melanoschistus* (Ibis, 1869, p. 356) as distinguishable from *A. nisus* by its conspicuously larger size, and that he has arrived at this conclusion after a recent comparison of specimens of each species in Lord Walden's collection. These seem to be the points chiefly requiring notice here; and we are glad to learn that the second part is already in the press. The work is dedicated to Messrs. Blyth and Jerdon as those who "have done more for Indian ornithology than all other modern observers put together." But the last sentence appears to us to be rather too sweeping when we remember the labours of Mr. Brian Hodgson.

To the 'Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal' for 1869 (vol. xxxviii. pt. 2, pp. 164-191) Mr. Blanford has contributed a note-worthy paper, chiefly on some birds of Central, Western, and Southern India, contained in three collections made (1) in Nagpoor, Chanda, and the Upper Godavery, (2) at and near Khandalla on the Western Ghauts, and (3) on the Neilgherry hills. Some of the most interesting novelties in the first of these were mentioned by the author in a letter he formerly addressed to us (Ibis, 1867, pp. 461-464); but the present paper contains much useful information, especially in the way of details of the relative distribution of certain migratory species. The most important fact, perhaps, here made known is the detection, by Mr. Fairbank*, on the Pulney hills in Southern India of a new species of *Trochalopteron*, designated by Mr. Blanford *T. fairbanki*, of which a good likeness is given. The species would seem to be, on its own hills, the representative of *T. jerdoni* of the Wynaad; and between the ranges of these two lie the Neilgherries, inhabited by *T. cachinnans*.

The same 'Journal' for 1870 contains some brief notes on the

* To this gentleman is also due the discovery of the beautiful *Callene albiventris*, described and figured by Mr. Blanford, P. Z. S. 1867, p. 832, pl. xxxix.

fauna of the Nicobar Islands, by Mr. V. Ball, of the Geological Survey of India, who paid a short visit of eight days to the new settlement at the Nancowry harbour, situated between the northern coast of that island and the southern coast of of Camorta, and to Trinkutt, all three belonging to the middle group of the Nicobars. The author had but little time for collecting birds; and among the twenty-one species observed by him, only two (a *Turnix* and an *Ægialitis*) had not been before recorded from Camorta; unfortunately, of neither were specimens preserved for determination. We have only room for one remark, which is that *Eulabes andamanensis* (Ibis, 1867, p. 331) was found on that island, thus justifying Lord Walden's belief in its range extending from the Andamans to the Nicobars.

XLII.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

The following letters, addressed "To the Editor of the 'Ibis,'" have been received by us:—

Calcutta, April 2, 1870.

SIR,—I send you a few notes on the Ornithology of the Cardamum Hills of Travancore, taken during a six weeks' tour I lately made there; but, as Elephant-hunting was my chief object, I was unable to form a large collection. Many of the species, however, are interesting, and show a strong resemblance to the Cingalese birds. The Cardamum Hills extend from latitude 9° N. to latitude 10° 20', where they approach the Pulney and Annamallay ranges, and are from 3000 to 8000 feet in height. They rise very abruptly from the plains on the east, and slope gradually to the west coast, in which direction the Perryaur, the only important stream, also flows. In many parts they are covered with magnificent virgin forest up to the height of 6000 feet; but a great deal of the country is open, covered with tall lemon-grass or scattered trees, and the valleys are filled with dense bamboo- or reed-jungle. Rhododendrons flourish above 6000 feet; and at that elevation most of the birds of the Neilgherries are found. One remarkable feature in the ornithology of the district is the absence of Birds-of-prey; for,